Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Unedited transcript

441st Meeting
Monday, 9 June 1997, 10 a.m.
Vienna

Chairman: Mr. RAO (India)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I now declare open the 441st meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

This morning we will continue and conclude our consideration of agenda item 10, "Spin-off benefits of space technology". That will leave us with only agenda item 8, and we will continue our consideration of this agenda item, "Report of the Legal Subcommittee", once discussion on agenda item 10 is concluded. At that time the results of the informal consultations which took place on Friday afternoon will be announced. Depending on those results, we will either conclude our consideration of agenda item 8 this morning, convene a working group on that item, or continue with the informal consultations.

Time permitting and depending on the results of the work on agenda item 8, we will also begin, in an informal session, our paragraph-by-paragraph consideration of the draft report of the Committee. This afternoon, the Committee will either continue its consideration of agenda item 8 or continue its paragraph-by-paragraph consideration of the draft report in an informal meeting.

Spin-off benefits of space technology (cont.)

The CHAIRMAN: I have several speakers on my list, and the first speaker is the distinguished representative of Canada.

Mr. W. LARSON (Canada): I would like to make a brief statement regarding the importance of spin-off benefits in the Canadian space programme, and the results achieved.

Activity in space to explore the solar system and satisfy humanity's thirst for knowledge, although important, should be accompanied by space programmes and activities to help solve problems on Earth and address human needs. Canada has long attempted to generate spin-off applications and technologies from its activities in space. In some cases, our programmes were chosen because the technologies required to implement them could be transferred into other applications and uses with spectacular results. In other cases, our activities in space have generated spin-off technologies and benefits that we could not possibly have anticipated, and examples of these two kinds of spin-offs are as follows.

In the field of robotics, Canada has employed the technologies and capabilities developed for its space robotics programme for terrestrial uses and applications in such areas as nuclear waste facility clean-up; mining; automated robotic gasolene pumps; selective fertilizer and chemical spray equipment for agriculture; repair of hydroelectric lines; force-reflecting devices to assist the blind in using a computer mouse; telemedicine; industrial assembly; and flight simulators.

In communications, technologies developed for Canada's telecommunication satellites have been applied to education programmes for remote schools; telemedicine; remote Internet access; video conferencing; and entertainment broadcasting.

As far as remote technologies are concerned, technologies originally meant for ice monitoring have been adapted, through Canada's RADARSAT programme, and applied to a host of other uses including crop monitoring; ship navigation; water management; disaster monitoring; mineral exploration; and land use mapping.

In the field of space science, some of the specific spin-off technologies developed in Canada include data relay systems for remote meteorological measurements and avionics; communications terminals and traffic monitors; telemetry, command and control systems;

optical character readers; artificial vision systems; radiation dosimeters for dose control in cancer therapy; noise sources and instrument calibration; high-temperature battery design; infrared detectors; remote sensing using CCD-based images; mass spectrometers for trade gas analysis, detection of explosives, drugs and diseases and identification of different types of forests; power line monitors; and corrosion-resistant coatings. This list is by no means complete.

We live in an era of environmental degradation and severe economic hardship for many peoples. The possibility exists that the Earth's capacity to provide for the needs of its creatures may soon be exhausted. But we also live in an era of unparalleled opportunity and promise.

Today we are witnessing the emergence of technologies and capabilities that have tremendous potential to solve some of the problems we face and alleviate some of the hardships which many people bear. This forms a major part of the reason for human activity in space, and also a major part of the reason for our presence here today.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Spain.

? ? ? ? ? ? (Spain) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: When my delegation addressed the meeting last week, we stated that an expert from the National Institute of Aerospace Technology in Spain would be here today to address the meeting concerning the MINISAT 01 launch in Spain. It was launched on 21 April from a Pegasus launcher over the island of Gran Canaria. Our expert will show the meeting a video which we hope will be of interest.

Mr. A. VRECH (Spain) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I welcome this opportunity to address you on the MINISAT 01 programme.

I would like to give you some background on how this was achieved, our expectations for the future, the rest of the programme and what we hope to achieve through this type of satellite. This photograph is not too clear, but the MINISAT is visible on the launcher. I will also give some information on the innovations in the launching of this satellite, which has many advantages for other countries and organizations.

I will give a brief introduction to the MINISATs, and explain why they are called mini-satellites and what our expectations are. I will then proceed to the MINISAT programme itself: MINISAT 01, its mission, its subsistence, the land segment launching. I will then show two videos which I hope will be rather more entertaining than my statement!

Mini-satellites are small satellites which are low-cost, simple and rapidly assembled. This is due to the technological progress which has been achieved, miniaturization, reduction of [redundancies?], new philosophies in design documentation and trials. An operational satellite can therefore be built in less time and for less money than before. This enables other States and organizations which have smaller budgets to join the space race.

The MINISAT programme which was developed in Spain began with the idea of seeing if it were possible to design, manufacture, integrate, test and launch a satellite from Spain. This was the initial idea, and we managed to achieve it through training of staff and with infrastructures which allowed us to make further progress and manufacture more satellites. MINISAT is a reusable, modular platform so that with what we have already developed and what is already in flight now, other types of satellites can be mounted in the MINISAT series. These include series 0, which are scientific satellites, series 1, Earth observation, and series 2, communication.

From MINISAT 01, it is possible to have Earth observation, which is currently under study, as well as communications. I will now show a MINISAT video. Due to technical difficulties it has not been possible to provide the written text for delegates. The video is actually in Spanish but I will be giving a commentary to accompany it. Afterwards I will give an explanation which I hope will further clarify this. I think it will prove helpful for you to see pictures of what I will subsequently be explaining.

(video presentation) This shows the advantages for daily life which can be derived from outer space and its applications. To date, it has only been the major space-faring nations or organizations which have been able to achieve this. This is the MINISAT programme. At the national level, we developed MINISAT 01 through our research plan with a scientific mission to enable both Spanish scientists as well as those from other nations can put their experiments into orbit.

This gives scientists the possibility of not having too long to wait for international missions. The average time for a standard mission is ten years, and with the current rapid advance in technology, this becomes virtually meaningless and outdated by the time it is achieved. This is a problem of global dimensions. These pictures show a Spanish construction establishment; it is

possible to see a new generation of spacecraft which are smaller and which cost less to produce. Thanks to new technology, we are able to design and manufacture at a lower cost and much more rapidly than in the past.

Technology can now be reused for other missions; technology is modular and the modules have standard interfaces to enable them to be linked up to other equipment, with resultant savings in costs. We hope to have a full system of design, manufacture, integration, tests and launching. Many people have been trained who previously had no experience in the field of space. MINISAT was constructed by Spanish industry, and a number of companies took part in its development and manufacture. Tests were carried out on the satellite, again carried out entirely in Spain — vibration, electric and environmental tests which were all carried out as required.

In October 1996, two years after the start of preparations, the unit was ready. The complete system comprises not only satellites: the land unit and platform are equally important. It has two modules, the service module and the payload. Later on, I will explain what each module contains and what the missions and tasks involve. For the service module, various payloads can be taken on board so that the mission is more rapid and even cheaper.

This shows you the station at Las Palomas, in the Canary Islands, which is used for monitoring. INTA has its control centre in Madrid and the data processing unit is also in Madrid. The third segment is the launcher, and I will be showing a separate video of the launcher itself, which is the Pegasus launcher. It is a special launcher which is carried by an aircraft to a specific altitude; I will be giving further details shortly.

This shows the launch, but I would prefer not to go into details on it right now as this is not the MINISAT 01 launch. I will be showing you the full video of the MINISAT 01 launch, which is only some five minutes long. This is a launcher with wings, and with air support so that the fuel requirement is lower.

I will stop the video now, as next we will come to the experiments which have been carried out, and I would like to give you some explanations beforehand. This is a scientific mission of MINISAT 01, and it is scientific experiments which are carried on board. There are three experiments which involve INTA, universities and other scientific institutes from around the world, in an endeavour to cooperate with various countries.

The experiment EURD, the first, is an experiment carried out by INTA at the University of California in Berkeley. It looks at measures of radiation in orbit, which is not possible from Earth. Important scientific measurements are taken; there is a theory that says that the obscure mass of the universe which is not visible is made up of neutrons which decompose and follow the same band. If the radiation band can be detected by MINISAT 01, it can be demonstrated that these neutrons exist and that there is a mass which cannot be observed.

The second experiment, [ALEGRE?], is in two parts. Firstly, it tests new gamma-ray detectors in space and gamma mapping of different sources which hitherto have not been fully examined. Spanish universities are working on this experiment in collaboration with various British universities.

CPLM is from the Polytechnic of Madrid; its liquid performance in space is important, particularly if we hope to have space stations outside the Earth's atmosphere in zero gravity. It is thus important to have data available on liquid behaviour for the elimination of waste and various other aspects.

The final experiment is not a scientific one as such; this one comprises solar panels with regulated velocity. These experiments lead us to set certain parameters for the mission, such as different degrees of orbit inclination and altitude.

[return to video presentation] This shows the first experiment, the EURD, and its deployment. CPLM is just a box. The third one is a complex one; a [stellar?] sensor for clear positioning. This latter experiment had the most participants made up into various teams.

Spanish industry has shown that it can run a full space programme from start to finish with complete success. The MINISAT is a new concept, a new instrument which can be used by governments and institutions, since the budget is approximately one-tenth of that of conventional satellites. The preparation time is also shorter, approximately two years. Thanks to these satellites it is possible to bring them closer to those who previously have not been able to benefit from their use.

I will now give you a general outline of the features of the satellite. It is a mini-satellite. It has folding panels, 240 Watts, stabilization on three axes with a three-degree error, which is perfectly acceptable for this mission. It has a 32 M-bit memory, two transmission speeds, and it can be programmed — which is an important factor as it is only within sight five times a day

for 10 minutes each time, and the rest of the time it is working from the programme.

The sub-systems comprising the platform are the general ones which form part of any satellite, with a structure for transmission of load maintaining all the equipment in place. It has to withstand the stress, especially under launch. For the solar panels a simple but critical mechanism is used: without these sufficient energy would not be generated. The satellite is maintained within the necessary margins of temperature, both active and passive — active being the heating units, and passive being the radiators and thermal control, which is the white cover seen here. The white cover reflects the Sun's rays and maintains the temperature within the necessary margins.

Altitude control is a critical issue; it has to be maintained within a certain band, which is achieved with the solar panels pointing towards the Sun initially. The payload is in the opposite position, with no Sun rays on it, otherwise the mission would be lost. Thus the position is very important and has to be maintained at all times. With the three axes we are able to do this, by using sensors and an [inertia wheel?] that maintains it in the correct position, and then there is the software that goes in the onboard computer for control purposes.

The onboard computer is a 386; there are very few 386 computers in outer space, and this is one of the few. The other is RADARSAT, referred to earlier by the representative of Canada. This is where the onboard software is used to respond to commands from the Earth and to memorize telemetrics and other scientific data for subsequent downloading. The power system is a [Nicad?] battery, for use when there is no Sun on the solar panels.

As far as communications are concerned, for receiving control commands from Earth and sending the necessary signals to position the satellite, a transponder with two S-band antennas is used. Two signals are used, a low velocity one and a high velocity one for scientific data transmission.

If delegates have any questions on technical aspects, I will be happy to answer them later.

The land station is in Las Palomas, Gran Canaria. There are two antennae, one 5 metres and the other 15 metres, the latter being a reserve. All the equipment necessary for downloading data is available, and for following the satellite whenever it happens to pass overhead. The INTA control centre in Madrid is where the data are processed; they are then sent to LAEFF, processed, and forwarded to other universities and research centres. Everything is linked up from point to point for speed of data transmission.

The last segment of the system is the launcher. It is a Pegasus launcher and represents an innovative method because it is launched from an aircraft in flight. This way there is no problem of the lift-off phase from Earth. It is a dedicated launcher for mini-satellites and offers the advantage that since it is already on an aircraft, the launcher can be taken wherever it is needed. In this particular case, Spain decided to launch MINISAT 01 from Western Europe; both the plane and the launcher went to INTA, and in this way the launcher can be taken to the satellite, rather than vice versa.

I will show you a short video of the launch itself. What you will see is direct taping during the launch. The aircraft carrying the Pegasus is a Lockheed 1011, and two Spanish air force F-18s are following it with cameras in order to film it. You can see the Lockheed 1011 in flight with the launcher on its underneath. When it reaches the precise point, and the last test has been carried out on the wings to make sure that they are working properly, then it detaches. There is a free-drop period of some 5 seconds, and then it lifts off.

This has been filmed from a camera on the launcher as well as from the ground (from Gran Canaria). An F-18 also tried to take film following the satellite, but of course it could not catch up with it! I was in Gran Canaria and was able to see it rising up. Then there is the end of the first phase, with separation, which you are able to see, with the coast of Africa in the background. The second phase has started and is continuing. The launch is monitored at all times to ensure that it stays within the margins; if it should go outside the margins, it would be destroyed.

At this point we are outside the Earth's atmosphere, which you can see from the colour. The second phase is about to finish, and then there is free flight for a certain period of time, followed by separation. This shows the third phase, and you can see the satellite itself. You can see South America, the African coast and the path of the satellite. After the third stage separation, we were able to see it disappearing on the horizon, and then from radar on the island of Aruba it was noted that separation did take place after the third stage.

Finally, this shows the orbit of MINISAT 01 over the Earth. Five passages each day are viewed from the Gran Canaria station at Las Palomas, with a 28° inclination. If it had been launched in the usual way, in the same direction as the Earth, the aircraft would have to have either been taken a long way away or launched

on the spot, which would have been virtually impossible. It therefore had to be launched in a westerly direction, against the movement of the Earth.

In the six weeks which have since elapsed, tests have been carried out in orbit. Everything has worked perfectly, and we are finishing off the calibration of experiments so that the scientific results will shortly be available. Therefore we have full and successful operation of MINISAT 01 in space. We have shown that it is possible to build mini-satellites and offer them to those who are interested. At present, we are defining MINISAT [114?] Earth observation in cooperation with Chile, and looking at development prospects for MINISAT 02, for scientific purposes.

In conclusion, it is evident that mini-satellites have proved to be a viable option for both countries and organizations who do not have large budgets for space activity. These are small satellites but they can perform significant work. They can carry out the same functions as larger satellites with the correct division of tasks. If there are any questions I will be happy to answer them.

[Unidentified speaker]: Why was it launched from 11,000 meters? [rest of question inaudible]

Mr. A. URECH (Spain) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: This was due to the problem of the weight of the mass of the launcher; it is very heavy and the aircraft could not take it high enough with the necessary security. Therefore from 10,000 or 11,000 meters, that was sufficiently high to ensure that the aircraft had sufficient velocity to launch it upwards.

[Unidentified speaker] *(interpretation)*: What is the time of active existence of the satellite? [in English] How many years does the transponder live for?

Mr. A. URECH (Spain) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The mission is calculated to last for two or three years, which is the requirement necessary for the two experiments. It is the time within which we can guarantee that the experiments have the necessary time to allow them to be completed. Therefore the satellite was calculated for two years, with a margin going up to three years of active life. Our idea is that it would probably last longer, but in principle, it is three years' active life for the satellite.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to thank the distinguished representative of Spain for his presentation. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the ISPRS.

Mr. J. TRINDER (Observer, International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS)): The ISPRS appreciates this opportunity to participate in the fortieth session of the Committee, particularly in relation to items 7, 9 and 10 of the agenda.

As Secretary General of the ISPRS, I would like to convey the best wishes of its President and Council, and to thank Dr. Jasentuliyana and the Office for Outer Space Affairs for their dedication and hard work.

The ISPRS is a non-governmental international organization devoted to the development of international cooperation for the advancement of photogrammetry and remote sensing and their applications. It is composed of 99 member organizations, six associate members from countries around the world (which are usually national professional societies), seven active regional member organizations, which represent Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, Australia and Oceania, and 35 sustaining members representing corporations and research institutions.

Originally established in 1910, ISPRS is the oldest international organization in the field of photogrammetry, remote sensing and geographic information systems.

I would like to report on recent developments in the Society, including the willingness of ISPRS to participate in education and training programmes for UNISPACE III, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the ISPRS, and the support of ISPRS for a further conference on spin-off benefits of space exploration for developing countries.

The President of ISPRS, Mr. Lawrence [Fritz? Finch?], made a commitment during the meeting of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in February 1997 to provide education and training programmes in remote sensing and GIS for UNISPACE III. I would like to give you some information on plans for the development of education and training programmes for developing countries.

Following the eighteenth ISPRS Congress, held in Vienna last year, the General Assembly agreed to the formation of a task force in education opportunities, to be headed by Mr. [Marcio Bobasa?], Chairman of IMPI in Brazil. The task force has responsibility for the development of ISPRS-sponsored education and training programmes for developing countries. The strategies developed include the documentation of available training programmes in remote sensing and GIS,

cooperation with national members for the selection of candidates for the courses, and the presentation of courses by selected course authorities.

A pilot programme is planned for the Latin American centres which are funded by Brazil and Mexico, as part of the international course in remote sensing, in 1998. These strategies are consistent with the commitment of ISPRS to present a programme of training courses for UNISPACE III.

On 25 April 1997 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Office for Outer Space Affairs and ISPRS. In summary, the terms of this MOU commits both parties to promote and conduct activities of mutual interest in the field of United Nations space applications. The parties jointly aim to sponsor an event annually, jointly coordinate schedules, events, topics and/or specialist needs in the area of planning activities, jointly seek financial support and identify specialists and lecturers for United Nations events which require photogrammetric, remote sensing and GIS expertise, and that ISPRS should incorporate formal opportunities within the framework of the Programme on Space Applications to include in the quadrennial ISPRS Congress and the appropriate ISPRS commission, symposia and working group activities.

It also states that the ISPRS should be requested to provide scientific and technological expertise through reviews, evaluations and recommendations on space-related matters concerning remote-sensing. There are no financial implications in this MOU for either the United Nations or the ISPRS. The Society welcomes the signing of this MOU and will do all within its resources to ensure that the terms of it are fulfilled.

The second United Nations/ESA conference on spin-off benefits of space exploration is being proposed by the Office of Outer Space Affairs, through the Expert on Space Applications, Dr. Abiodun. ISPRS supports these efforts to programme such conference, and within the terms of the aforementioned MOU, will cooperation in an appropriate manner.

I would like to draw attention to some new developments in remote sensing which should be of interest to the Committee. These include the emergence of new high special-resolution remote sensing satellites that will become available within the next year or so; the development to the operational stage of digital photogrammetry based on digitized photography and remote sensing images; automatic digital terrain model generation, and photo production. This has resulted in the integration of digital technology with GIS for data acquisition, processing and management.

There is a growing demand for rapid, reliable and automated extraction and updating of GIS data from digital images. Substantial progress has been achieved, and there are a number of projects on automatic and semi-automatic road and building extraction. Developments in [inaudible word] methods use radar data to determine high-accuracy digital terrain model data from space. Spectral and radiometric studies and measurements to better understand the characteristics of reflected electromagnetic radiation recorded by remote sensing satellites have been developed.

There is a broad range of applications of remote sensing data for renewable resources, resource and environmental monitoring, terrestrial ecosystems, desertification and land degradation and human settlements. A better understanding has been reached of the characteristics of radar images and the relationships between the nature of terrain features and the characteristics of radar propagation.

All these developments demonstrate the expansion in technologies for Earth observation and the information that can be extracted from images by intelligent processing systems for understanding and monitoring the environment. They raise issues which are appropriate for consideration by COPUOS — for example, the increasing public availability of high-resolution data from space will influence views of States on non-discriminatory access to these data. Potential users of this data will require the knowledge and technology to enable them to take full advantage of it, which will require an intensification of efforts in education and training in remote sensing. Facilities will also need to be available to process the data. Long-term international strategies should be considered for collaboration in the area of remote sensing to include the coordination of programmes in remote sensing. This will thus reduce the duplication of efforts in the development of satellite systems by many countries.

I greatly appreciate this opportunity to make this report and share the views of the ISPRS, and would like to offer ISPRS activities as a contribution to the successful achievements of COPUOS.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other delegations wishing to agenda this agenda item? I see none. We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 10. We will now continue our consideration of agenda item 8.

Report of the Legal Subcommittee (cont.)

The CHAIRMAN: As you are aware, at the conclusion of our consideration of this item last Friday, 6 June, it was decided that further informal consultations on the working paper submitted by Germany would take place. I would therefore like to give the floor to the distinguished representative of Germany to report on the results of these consultations. Following this report, we will then have an exchange of views on this subject.

Mr. G. FULDA (Germany): As I announced in my first statement under this agenda item, I had to ask for the floor again in order to present the results of the informal consultations held last Friday. Some 20 delegations participated in these consultations, which lasted until 6.15 p.m. I mention this as it shows the great interest of many delegations to achieve a positive result.

The discussion covered all elements of the draft resolution, concentrating on possible amendments with regard to the legal basis of this initiative and as concerns the relationship between COPUOS and the ITU. Two or three possible changes were identified which could have found consensus, subject however to an overall agreement with regard to the text as a whole. Unfortunately, such an overall agreement could not be reached.

Divergencies remained over three issues. First, some delegations insisted on the deletion of one of the preambular paragraphs which stated that the geostationary orbit is part of outer space and as such is governed by the Outer Space Treaty. Other delegations were not prepared to accept a resolution which did not include such a reference.

Secondly, controversies remained over the character of ITU and the relationship between it and COPUOS. Whether the ITU should be regarded as a mere technical agency not dealing with general political or legal issues, or whether the ITU itself is competent to solve all questions concerning access to the geostationary orbit, remained an open question. The respective text in the draft resolution could have been amended with an addition which referred to the competence of the ITU in general terms, thus bridging the gap between the divergent views. However, the problem arose again as concerns possible regular two-way communication between COPUOS and the ITU.

This in turn related to the third controversial question, namely the future role of this topic on the agenda of COPUOS and its Legal Subcommittee. Views could not be reconciled as to whether the item on the geostationary orbit should be deleted from the agenda, maintained but suspended for a certain period, or should lead to intensified discussion in the framework of mutual exchange of information between the two bodies.

The consultations were held in a constructive atmosphere of good faith, and no one could cast any doubt on the goodwill of the representatives participating in these endeavours. However, it became obvious that instructions from authorities limited the flexibility of certain delegations, and it became apparent that no agreement is to be reached during the present meeting.

My delegation would like to share with the Committee our evaluation of the situation. We set out with the belief that the longstanding controversy over sovereign rights with regard to the geostationary orbit might have disappeared, as the substance of discussions had shifted more to the subject of preferential access. This was too optimistic; some delegations still cannot accept the statement that the geostationary orbit is part of outer space and as such governed by the Outer Space Treaty.

In our opinion, this statement must be the common legal basis for any such resolution. If some delegations argue that such a reference is not necessary, then we believe that this is going in the wrong direction. The question is not whether such a reference is necessary, but whether this reference is acceptable, and this question was answered in the negative. We must ask ourselves why, if the geostationary orbit is not part of outer space, it is maintained on the agenda of the United Nations COPUOS?

As concerns preferential treatment, no delegation should be under the illusion of obtaining in COPUOS what cannot be achieved in the ITU. If the German delegation has accepted preferential treatment within the ITU, then this was due to the nature of some countries being developing countries rather than being equatorial countries. For example, why should Ecuador receive better treatment than Mexico, Nigeria better treatment than Morocco, or Indonesia better treatment than India?

The new controversy over the political or technical nature of the ITU is to my delegation not the real issue. There is no doubt that under its mandate and on the basis of its Constitution, ITU is a full-fledged specialized organization of the United Nations competent to deal with all relevant aspects of telecommunications, be they of a political, legal or technical nature. The real issue here is the question of whether and how this issue should be dealt with on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee.

Under this agenda item, in past years fruitless discussions have taken place which have yielded no results and involved endless repetition. My delegation tried to look for a positive solution and we have put forward all the compromises possible. We have offered to suspend discussion of this issue for a few years, allowing all delegations a pause for thought. But if notwithstanding all these efforts it is not possible to obtain the slightest concession, then we are fighting a losing battle.

The German draft resolution entitled "Request to the International Telecommunication Union and its Member States: Ensuring equitable access to the geostationary orbit/radio frequency spectrum resources", as reproduced in Annex II of the report of the Legal Subcommittee (document A/AC.105/674) is withdrawn herewith.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your report on the results of the informal consultations. There may now be an exchange of views on this subject. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ecuador.

Mr. L. ARIZAGA (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I am making this statement on behalf of the Latin American Group who held a plenary meeting this morning to review the work of the present session of the Committee. GRULAC focused its attention on the subject of the geostationary orbit and reiterated its position at this morning's plenary, whereby it believes that this subject must continue to be discussed in the Committee and its Subcommittees.

Consequently, GRULAC believes that this subject should not be removed or suspended from the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee. Discussions should continue and the working group should be reconstituted at future sessions of the Subcommittee. GRULAC will follow closely developments in this important area.

I have made this statement on behalf of the ambassador of Bolivia, who is the President of GRULAC but who unfortunately had to attend another meeting at this particular moment. For its part, the delegation of Ecuador will make a statement at a later stage.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of France.

Mr. P. LOUET (France) *(interpretation from French)*: My delegation is satisfied with the solution reached. The proposal made by the German delegation was an honest, well formulated proposal which was appreciated by most delegations, and it is regrettable that we have not reached an agreement on it today. Perhaps we should try to examine other methods through which to arrive at a consensus on this subject: it is the task of our Committee to try and reach consensus decisions on controversial matters such as this.

The point my delegation is making here is that it is less usual in this Committee for delegations to categorically refuse to acknowledge the Treaty on the Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies — to give the "Outer Space Treaty" its proper name. When discussing a text amongst ourselves, a proposal to change a wording previously agreed might be made, and this brings discussions to a halt. If we are unable to refer to a treaty which was approved, signed and ratified by States, then this means the very basis of our work is in jeopardy.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ecuador.

Mr. S. MARTINEZ (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation would like to refer to Ecuador's participation in the course of the informal consultations on the working paper submitted by the German delegation.

Firstly, my delegation did give its comments earlier under agenda item 8 and made its position clear on the question of the geostationary orbit. During the informal consultations, we took an active and constructive part in the deliberations. The subject itself is not an easy one to negotiate, which is why discussions in both the Legal Subcommittee and COPUOS have been and remain complex. In view of the importance of this subject, we have said that a certain amount of time is needed to analyse the new proposal; all positions must be respected and taken into account. Only in this way can an agreement be reached by consensus.

My delegation acknowledges that through the working paper submitted by the German delegation the discussion on the geostationary orbit has been revitalized. Views of various countries have been clearly stated and it has become obvious that this subject merits further discussion at future sessions of COPUOS and its subsidiary bodies. My delegation, along with others, will follow developments on this question with great interest and will continue to play an active role in such discussions.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Nigeria.

Mr. I. AYEWAH (Nigeria): My delegation would like to present its best wishes to you in presiding over this Committee.

My delegation wishes to state its views on the conclusions which have emerged from the informal discussions on the draft proposal submitted by Germany. There is of course a correlation of activities between COPUOS and the ITU, but my delegation cannot accept the argument that what cannot be achieved in the ITU may not be addressed, with a view to achieving results, by COPUOS.

The geostationary orbit is a subject which we have discussed for many years. There is a continuing necessity for the Committee to ensure that the geo-stationary orbit is accessible to all States, taking into account the specificity and nature of the orbit and the relation of various countries to it. We continue to believe that the equatorial States do have a legitimate claim to seeking preferential treatment.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Greece.

Ms. H. MICHALOPOULOU (Greece): My delegation would like to express its deep disappointment that the initiative of the German delegation has met with no consensus regarding the fundamental concept that the geostationary satellite orbit is an integral part of outer space.

Due to this unfortunate situation, the Committee has lost a unique opportunity to make a substantial contribution to the work of the World Radiocommunication Conference of the ITU, and thus to achieve considerable progress on the important issue of equitable access to the geostationary satellite orbit.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Japan.

Mr. H. AZUMA (Japan): After listening to the statement made by the distinguished representative of Germany, Japan would once again like to commend the German delegation for its contribution to the work of the Committee. It is regrettable that a consensus agreement has not been reached within the Committee on the draft resolution on the geostationary orbit contained in the German proposal.

My delegation reiterates its position, already stated, on this agenda item.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. P. DZOUBENKO (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian)*: Following the statements already made by the distinguished representatives of France and Greece, I can be brief. My delegation shares the views expressed by those two delegations, and we express our regret that it has not been possible at this session to obtain concrete results on this extremely important subject.

My delegation would like to express its gratitude to the German delegation, which during the last session of the Legal Subcommittee did its utmost to try and reach a compromise solution. We have shown the greatest possible flexibility with a view to reaching such a compromise, but this has unfortunately not been possible. Differences of opinion still exist and it was thus impossible to find consensus. My delegation will not be able to agree to any document which might make reference to the geostationary orbit not forming a part of outer space and not being regulated by the basic operating norms of the ITU.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Canada.

Mr. W. LARSON (Canada): The Government of Canada wishes to join those other States which have thanked the German delegation for its constructive and positive proposal. We regret that no progress has been achieved on this issue. We also express regret that Germany has chosen to withdraw its proposal, as we believe this issue could have been discussed at some future point.

One possibility which remains would be to deal with the geostationary orbit in the same way as has been done with the issue of space debris — namely to ensure that if discussions on this are to continue in future, those discussions must be well thought out in terms of concrete workplans, as has been done concerning the subject of space debris. This would represent a constructive approach to this important issue, and we hope that a spirit of compromise can prevail when making the appropriate workplans.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Czech Republic.

Mr. L. PEREK (Czech Republic): My delegation has made many statements on the geostationary orbit in the past. We have always tried to put forward the

scientific point of view, stressing the facts which have been established and recognized worldwide.

My delegation regrets that in the future we will be restricted to reiteration of what has already been said — unless there is a change in the views of some delegations, particularly those of the equatorial countries.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of India.

Mr. G. NAIR (India): My delegation appreciates the sincere efforts made by the German delegation to reach a consensus. All members who participated in the informal discussions cooperated in trying to achieve a positive result. However, the issues involved are complex; agreements were reached on many points but some differences of opinion still remain.

My delegation hopes that discussions will continue on this issue, and will particularly address these differences in view as identified by the distinguished representative of Germany.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Indonesia.

Mr. A. NUR (Indonesia): My delegation supports the statement made by the distinguished representative of Ecuador, on behalf of GRULAC, that the agenda item on the geostationary orbit should remain on the Legal Subcommittee's agenda.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Argentina.

Mr. O. REBAGLIATI (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation is somewhat surprised that, four days before the scheduled end of the session, we are not able to reach a consensus. Other colleagues have already given their assessments of the options available. Experience has shown that major difficulties could be overcome in a comparatively short period, through informal consultations and negotiations.

My delegation can make no general proposals if it is felt that the opportunity for such consultations no longer exists. We agree with other States that we should do the utmost to achieve results on the discussion of this question. We nevertheless believe that great efforts have been made to try and achieve positive results. The contribution of the German delegation is a significant one, as are those from other delegations who have tried to find a common denominator. A collective effort is needed not only as concerns the number of people involved but also the kind of involvement in the consultations which took place.

If we are unable to reach a consensus on the fundamental treatment of this issue at this session, then my delegation would support the proposal of the distinguished representative of Canada. We must examine this question again, taking into account the contents of the draft resolution proposed by Germany and other possible approaches that might help us reach a solution regarding specific dimensions of equitable use of and access to the geostationary orbit. We may have to change our approach; perhaps we need to be a little less ambitious; and perhaps we should try to avoid certain basic definitions.

Without taking an overall decision on actual concept, it may be possible at a future session of the Legal Subcommittee to examine the issue and find a solution to these outstanding questions. All members should try and identify these questions in cooperation with the Secretariat.

The distinguished representative of Canada suggested that we enter into this individual inter-sessional exercise. My delegation believes that we must all try and produce specific questions, based on the work carried out to date, to try and overcome the divergent views. The Secretariat has a role to play in providing information on this subject, as in other areas, in order to focus our attention more clearly on what remains to be done in the future.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Chile.

Mr. A. CELEDON (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation agrees with the statement made on behalf of GRULAC. The question of the geostationary orbit should be maintained on the Legal Subcommittee's agenda, and should be extensively debated in the future.

My delegation also expresses its appreciation to the German delegation for the draft resolution which it presented. This document has definitely helped to intensify discussion on this subject, and differing views have now been clarified. Perhaps more time was needed to discuss the draft resolution; it was submitted only at the last session of the Subcommittee. Two months later it has been intensively discussed, and possibly with more time a different outcome may have arisen. This kind of document helps to promote broad and honest discussion on this important issue, which should be maintained on the Subcommittee's agenda.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Mexico.

Mr. V. ARRIAGA (Mexico) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation fully endorses the position expressed by GRULAC as concerns maintaining this item on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee. My delegation greatly appreciates the efforts made by the German delegation in trying to help resolve this issue. Due to the interest that has been shown regarding the geostationary orbit, my delegation welcomes the proposal of the Canadian delegation to redefine the points for discussion. We are willing to help in evaluating and identifying those aspects of the geostationary orbit that require further examination.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of China.

Mr. HUANG Huikang (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: My delegation has made several statements on this agenda item. We would like to reiterate that patient consultations should continue on this important issue.

The following three approaches could be adopted in discussing the geostationary orbit. Firstly, we must try and achieve a consensus, which has always been our guiding principle. Secondly, a constructive approach needs to be adopted; we have encountered difficulties in trying to solve this problem, and therefore we agree with what has already been said by several delegations regarding the need for a constructive attitude. Lastly, we must try and demonstrate a true spirit of compromise, which will help lead to a successful result to our discussions. My delegation hopes that these three approaches will be given due consideration when reviewing this matter in the future.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Morocco.

Ms. S. OTMANI (Morocco) *(interpretation from French)*: My delegation welcomes the document submitted by the Colombian delegation on the geostationary orbit and we regret that there was no follow-up to it during the last session of the Legal Subcommittee. We would also like to pay tribute to the German delegation for all their efforts to help reach a compromise.

My delegation supports the proposal by Canada, and would like to see this item kept on the Subcommittee's agenda so that discussion on it may continue.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Brazil.

Mr. S. CALDAS MERCADOR (Brazil): As my delegation has already stated in several plenary meetings, Brazil holds the view that the subject of the geostationary orbit should be maintained on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee. We also pay tribute to the German delegation, who presented a very interesting proposal; unfortunately it was not possible to reach consensus on it. We support the views expressed by many other delegations that the item must continue to be discussed in the Subcommittee.

The CHAIRMAN: I give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. F. JAHEDI (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation would like to associate itself with the views expressed by the Group of 77 on this issue. We feel this item must remain on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee in the hope that future deliberations will help us to reach a compromise solution in the future.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Poland.

Mr. R. GALAZKA (Poland): My delegation shares the views already expressed this morning by a number of delegations, in particular the delegations of Greece, Russian Federation and Canada. We regret that it was not possible to reach a consensus on this issue, but we hope that despite this we have still achieved some progress in the debate on this issue.

My delegation expresses its appreciation to the German delegation for an excellent piece of work in preparing the draft resolution. We hope it will form the basis for further discussions on this subject.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Colombia.

Ms. A. BONILLA (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation fully supports the statement made on behalf of GRULAC. We also appreciate the efforts made and encouragement provided by the draft resolution of the German delegation. We will continue to closely follow the work carried out on this important subject within the Legal Subcommittee.

My delegation welcomes the proposal made by the distinguished representative of Canada to identify those points which should be further debated in order to try and reach a consensus.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further contributions from delegations on this subject? I see none.

I am grateful to those delegates who have expressed their views on this very difficult and controversial subject. There is a saying that there are two ways of looking at every situation: for example, a glass can be either half-empty or half-full. Being an optimist, after listening to the statements made, a considerable amount of consensus exists. Everyone appreciates the efforts made by the German delegation, as well as the cooperative atmosphere in which the informal consultations took place; one step has at least been taken in the right direction.

However, it is true that we have been unable to conclude our discussion under this agenda item. Many delegations have supported the proposal by the distinguished representative of Canada in saying that constructive discussions should continue on this item. There is, however, a problem of a technical nature. The distinguished representative of Germany has withdrawn the working paper which formed the basis for the discussions. Is it possible that the German delegation may wish to reintroduce the working paper so that discussions on it may continue? I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Germany.

Mr. G. FULDA (Germany): As I said, the draft resolution is withdrawn. My delegation feels that fruitful discussions on this subject can only start again if some delegations radically change their positions. Until that is done, further discussions would be pointless.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Nigeria.

Mr. I. AYEWAH (Nigeria): My delegation thought that perhaps the Secretariat might suggest the appropriate manner in which to proceed at this point in time. Germany has decided to withdraw its working paper, and this subject is important enough that we are all interested in continuing discussions on it. Consensus has been reached on the fact that this topic must continue to be discussed, and therefore there should be a way to retain this topic on the agenda of both the Legal Subcommittee and the Committee itself.

It would therefore be helpful if the Secretariat could give us their views on this point.

The CHAIRMAN: The subject will in any event remain on the agenda of the Subcommittee. The question is rather whether the German delegation would be interested in reintroducing their working paper either now or at a later stage. It is a very positive sign to see that so many delegations wish to continue discussions on this matter. Before asking Dr. Jasentuliyana to reply, I will now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Argentina.

Mr. O. REBAGLIATI (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation believes it would be very helpful to have Dr. Jasentuliyana's contribution concerning this issue, on the basis of the proposal by the distinguished representative of Nigeria.

Useful background work has been prepared, namely the draft proposal submitted by Colombia, and the draft resolution proposed by Germany, which has been withdrawn but which has not disappeared. The paper still exists, albeit without a sponsor. There is a possibility that the distinguished representative of Canada might produce some suggestions as to how to focus discussion on this subject in the future. All delegations could offer their suggestions to the Secretariat during the inter-sessional period, and last but not least, the Secretariat too may make some proposals before the next session of the Legal Subcommittee.

There is therefore scope for continued discussion of this subject on the basis of the documents which already exist and others which may be produced in the months to come, before the next session of the Subcommittee.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Canada.

Mr. W. LARSON (Canada): My delegation would like to reiterate what we previously stated. I also apologize for any confusion caused; many States, including my colleague from Germany, misunderstood what was said, and I would therefore like to repeat it.

My delegation's position is as follows. Canada supports the proposal of the German delegation that this item should be completely withdrawn from discussion in COPUOS and its subsidiary bodies. That is our first objective, and we welcome the constructive and positive proposal of Germany for achieving that objective. However, there is such a reluctance on the part of some States to meet Germany halfway and make some compromise on this very constructive proposal. Therefore a possible alternative might be that this discussion only be continued in future if those States wanting to continue the discussion propose concrete annual workplans, itemizing exactly what should be discussed, as has been the case concerning the subject of space debris.

Discussion would therefore not continue unless such concrete workplans come into being; discussion would not continue willy nilly as it has for many years but would continue at a concrete and practical level. That was the point my delegation wished to make, and I apologize for any misunderstanding.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ecuador.

Mr. L. ARIZAGA (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The position of the Canadian delegation has now been clarified: they feel discussion of this issue should be suspended until such time as a concrete workplan is drawn up. My delegation has respectfully taken note of this proposal, but does not endorse it.

The position of GRULAC and the Group of 77 has been perfectly clear: this subject should be maintained on the Legal Subcommittee's agenda and substantive discussion of it should continue. At future meetings we will have before us the proposal of Colombia, as well as the draft working paper of Germany, which has been withdrawn but which can serve as a reference document, and other proposals or suggestions which may materialize from discussions here.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Brazil.

Mr. S. CALDAS MERCADOR (Brazil): On a point of order, I assume that the statement by the distinguished representative of Canada is the position taken by his country: he is not making any proposal. He stated that he favoured the withdrawal or suspension of the subject from the Subcommittee's agenda, but this is Canada's position only. My delegation would appreciate clarification on this point as at present no actual proposal exists.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Canada.

Mr. W. LARSON (Canada): My delegation's position is that it would be far more preferable to proceed with discussion on the draft resolution proposed by Germany, and that it should not be withdrawn. In the absence of that possibility, then we would perhaps support a proposal that States wishing to discuss this issue should submit concrete workplans. Failing that, consideration of this issue should be suspended within COPUOS and its subsidiary bodies until such time as those workplans are submitted and agreed to by consensus.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Chile.

Mr. A. CELEDON (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: It is perfectly clear to my delegation that the item on the geostationary orbit remains on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee. We appreciate the importance of this subject; we need further clarification as to whether the German working paper which has now been withdrawn, unfortunately, could perhaps be kept as an unofficial non-paper of the Subcommittee.

The CHAIRMAN: At this point in time I would like to request Dr. Jasentuliyana to provide some clarification.

Mr. N. JASENTULIYANA (Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs; Deputy Director-General, United Nations Office at Vienna): It is for the Committee to decide how we should proceed on this matter. I can only note the following.

The item is presently on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee, and until such time as a consensus decision is taken by the Committee to suspend or discontinue discussion on it, it remains on the Subcommittee's agenda. At the next session of the Subcommittee, the working paper submitted by Colombia will be available, as well as a paper (L.205) prepared by the Secretariat and the ITU jointly on the compatibility of the Colombia paper. These two papers are annexed to the Subcommittee's report. As far as I can see, the Legal Subcommittee has recommended that this item be maintained on its agenda.

With regard to the working paper submitted by Germany, it is for the German delegation to decide whether they wish to reintroduce it in the same or an amended form at the next session of the Legal Subcommittee. The distinguished representative of Chile has proposed that it could take the form of a non-paper; it is possible for the text to be adopted by delegations as a non-paper for discussion purposes at the next session of the Subcommittee.

The CHAIRMAN: I wonder if you would kindly clarify the status of discussion on this subject in this Committee.

Mr. N. JASENTULIYANA (Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs; Deputy Director-General, United Nations Office at Vienna): For the time being, it is my understanding that the German delegation has withdrawn the document. Therefore, for the time being the Committee wishes to conclude its discussion on this

subject at the present session, and resume discussion on it at the next session of the Legal Subcommittee, as I outlined above.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of China.

Mr. HUANG Huikang (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: My delegation has two points of procedure which it would like to mention. Firstly, concerning the status of the working paper submitted by Germany, the intention of this proposal was that the draft resolution could be submitted to the ITU in time for the World Radiocommunication Conference, to be held in October 1997. If COPUOS cannot reach a consensus at the present session, this opportunity will be lost to us. The question which then arises is whether we should discuss this draft resolution at next year's session.

Secondly, as the World Radiocommunication Conference does present a good opportunity for submission of the document, we should try and take advantage of it. My delegation therefore wonders if it might be possible to transform the working paper submitted by Germany into a Chairman's working paper. When we discussed the Declaration on cooperation in outer space, which was approved at the last session, there were at that particular point two working papers. One was submitted by ten countries, including Brazil. Another was submitted by France and Germany. After several rounds of discussions we formulated this as a Chairman's working paper.

At the last session of the Legal Subcommittee, Germany submitted a working paper, and after much discussion in the Subcommittee a revised version of this document appeared. Therefore my delegation believes that this document does not constitute only the original document submitted by the German delegation: it also includes the views of many other delegations. Therefore, to simply withdraw this working paper is very regrettable as it means that a great amount of effort made by many delegations would be lost. We therefore hope that at the present session, we can try to benefit from all the valuable work carried out to date.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to ask Dr. Jasentuliyana to clarify the legal position in this context.

Mr. N. JASENTULIYANA (Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs; Deputy Director-General, United Nations Office at Vienna): There is little more I can say. The delegation of China is correct in saying that the text of the German working paper was intended to be submitted to the World Radiocommunication Conference. However, ITU does hold other conferences, including the general conference in 1998. If agreement is reached on an appropriate text for submission to the ITU, there are other conferences to which such text can be submitted.

The delegation of China quite rightly stated that the revised version of the text contains ideas and views of other delegations. Nevertheless, the revised version was presented by the German delegation and it therefore remains their proposal, although it took into account certain discussions within the Legal Subcommittee. If there are no objections from delegations, it is possible to consider adoption of the text as a Chairman's paper, as proposed by the delegation of China.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Nigeria.

Mr. I. AYEWAH (Nigeria): Debate on this item seems to be dragging on *ad infinitum*. My delegation believes that the position of Germany, in present the working paper, simply provided a perspective on the question; that is all. States have reacted to that perspective, which in turn resulted in a revised document. Germany retains the prerogative to either continue or withdraw its paper. It has taken the decision this morning to withdraw it. Therefore, this Committee has taken due note of Germany's position.

The Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs has informed us that the Legal Subcommittee already has documentation available on this item for its meeting in 1998. We should thus proceed on that basis; if at that point in time the German delegation should hold a different view on the submission of the document, it may act accordingly. But until that point, the paper has been withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: The technical position is very clear: the controversial issue of the geostationary orbit will remain on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee, which has two documents before it for discussion.

As concerns whether the German delegation would like to reconsider the reintroduction of the working paper which has been withdrawn this morning, is there consensus among delegations that that paper should be introduced as a Chairman's working paper? If there is consensus, then we can proceed accordingly. Otherwise, as has been stated by the distinguished representative of Nigeria, the Legal Subcommittee will continue its discussions in the light of the two documents

which already exist, and the German delegation may reintroduce their document if they so wish.

I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Peru.

[Mr. L. CABRERA?] (Peru) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Briefly, my delegation believes the statement made by the distinguished representative of Nigeria is very clear. The German delegation has withdrawn its working paper and therefore no further elaboration is necessary. At some future point it may be useful to consider this document in the Legal Subcommittee.

However, my delegation considers that any different interpretation of the document — such as adopting it as a Chairman's working paper — would not be appropriate at this point in time.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ecuador.

Mr. L. ARIZAGA (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation wishes to associate itself with what has just been said by the delegations of Nigeria and Peru.

The CHAIRMAN: I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Greece.

Ms. H. MICHALOPOULOU (Greece): As my delegation understands it, those States wishing to keep an item on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee should forward respective workplans. I would therefore like, through the Chair, to ask those interested delegations whether they intend to do this, independently of any documentation which already exists.

The CHAIRMAN: May I ask Dr. Jasentuliyana to respond on this point.

Mr. N. JASENTULIYANA (Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs; Deputy Director-General, United Nations Office at Vienna): There seems some confusion here, which I would like to clarify. If a new item is to be added to the agenda, then those delegations proposing such an item must present a workplan. But for those items already on the agenda, delegations may make suggestions — but this is not an obligation in order to keep the item on the agenda. As I mentioned, there are already two papers before the Legal Subcommittee under this item.

The CHAIRMAN: We have had an interesting discussion on this item. Some progress has been made; with the clarifications provided, the item remains on the Legal Subcommittee's agenda for future discussion.

Since no consensus has been reached as regards converting the working paper submitted by Germany into a Chairman's working paper, we will proceed on the understanding that the item will continue to be discussed in the Legal Subcommittee, with the two documents already referred to before it. We have thus therefore concluded our discussion on agenda item 8.

I will shortly adjourn this session of the Committee. Before doing so, I would like to remind delegates that the draft report has already been circulated, allowing time for its consideration. We will reconvene at 3 p.m. to discuss the draft report in informal session. The meeting is now adjourned.

The sitting adjourned at 12.30 p.m.